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Christmas Dinner for Two

By LOUISE DOOLE



In great grandmother's day, the Christmas dinner took days and days of work, but little planning. There was, perhaps, a family of fourteen, and twice as many guests. The food problem was solved by cooking every available vegetable, cake, pie, pudding and fowl. Quantity was the chief goal. But when families decreased from fourteen to four, there came new difficulties. Now we must plan well-balanced meals. We no longer have five kinds of cake and four kinds of pie for one meal. For that reason our pie or cake must be more carefully planned, so as to fit in with the rest of the menu.

To no one else, however, does the Christmas dinner prospect loom so large as to the young bride. She has only two for which to prepare, with perhaps a guest or so. The number is too small to warrant an immense turkey, regular Christmas plum pudding, or many other delicacies dear to the holiday. But, of course, she wants to prepare her first Christmas dinner in her very own home, with her new linen and silver and pretty china.

Fortunately four—and even two—can have a truly Christmas-ey dinner. The following menu, for example, is only a basic one, and may have infinite variation.

Fruit Cocktail				
or				
Tomato Boullion				
with Croutons				
Roast Goose or Chicken	Cranberry Sauce			
Mashed Potatoes	Green Vegetables			
Vegetable Salad with Cheese Straws				
or				
Paprika Crackers				
Bread		Butter		
Olives	Pickles	Celery		
	Dessert			
Bonbons	Nuts	Raisins		
	Coffee			

If a fruit cocktail is chosen for the first course, any combination of cubed fruit, either fresh or canned, may be used. The fruit should be served very cold in a cocktail glass. The first course may be omitted entirely, and the dinner begun with the *piece de resistance* and accompaniments. Then if there is no maid, everything except the dessert is placed on the table at once, and the host serves.

For the small dinner, roast chicken or goose, rather than turkey, will most likely be chosen, and even roast pork is delicious, as well as suited to pocketbooks inclined to become flat about Christmas time. If a pork roast is served, sweet potato croquettes may take the place of mashed white potatoes, and in place of cranberries, apples baked in the pan. For the latter choose firm red apples, wash, core, and fill the hollows with sugar or raisins. The addition of a few cinnamon drops will give a rosy color and delicious flavor. Half an hour before the meat is

done, place the apples around it and let them roast while the pork browns. The host serves an apple to each person with the slice of meat.

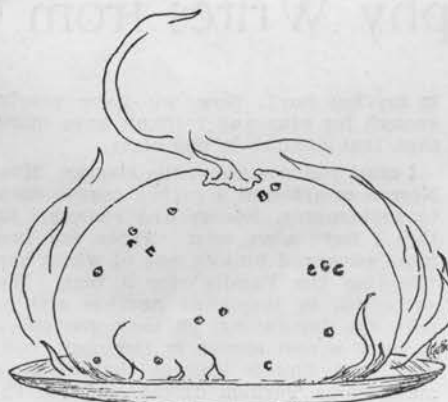
To make the croquettes, boil the sweet potatoes (about 2½ lbs. should be enough) until tender. Put thru a ricer, then season with salt, pepper, and a large piece of butter. Beat well and add sufficient hot milk to make the mixture easily handled. Form in balls or cones. These may be prepared the day before and kept in a cool place until just before time to serve. Then dip the croquettes into an egg beaten with a tablespoon of milk, roll in fine dry bread crumbs, and fry at 390° F. until brown.

If fowl is served, prepare as directed in "Trussing the Christmas Fowl," in this issue. Mashed potatoes will accompany the fowl. Two medium-sized potatoes for each person will be sufficient. They should be peeled the day before and kept in cold water until time to cook.

For the green vegetable there is a wide variety of choice. Creamed peas or green beans are always good. Onions au gratin are delicious and easily prepared. To make this, stew the onions in boiling salted water until tender, drain, and arrange in a baking dish a layer of onions, bread crumbs, salt, pepper, and butter; then another layer of the onions, finishing with buttered crumbs. Bake until the crumbs are brown.

Harvard beets are also good. Mix ¼ c. sugar, 1/3 t. salt, and 2/3 T. cornstarch, add 1/3 c. mild vinegar, and boil five minutes. Pour over 1 1/3 c. beets, cooked the day before and cut in small balls or one-half-inch cubes; cover and set over low fire for one-half hour. Add 1 1/3 T. butter just before serving.

The vegetable salad may be of raw chopped cabbage and carrots, or any other combination of raw or cooked vegetables. Asparagus makes a nice salad when decorated with strips of red pimento, or cauliflower, peas, green beans, tomatoes, green peppers, or any other vegetable not otherwise used in the menu may serve. The salad dressing, cheese straws or paprika crackers are made the preceding day so that on Christmas nothing need be done except combine the salad ingredients. Paprika crackers are made by spreading small crackers with a little butter and a dash of paprika and crisping in the oven.



Re-heated rolls or thinly sliced bread and the relishes complete the main part of the dinner. The hostess removes the plates, salad plates, vegetables, bread, meat and relishes, and serves the dessert.

Dessert gives another occasion for variety and wide choice. A fruit and nut gelatin dessert is an enjoyable finish to the dinner if fruit cocktail was not served for the first course. Mince pie is somewhat heavy for a meal of this type, but if you feel that Christmas is not Christmas without pie, apple pie a la mode will be a delightful substitute. Of course you will not serve apple pie if you have had apples in any other form.

The tendency now-a-days is to end a heavy meal with a light dessert, and nothing could be better than some kind of ice or sherbert. Serve apricot or pineapple ice, and see how its cool deliciousness will be appreciated.

Fruit Sherbet (1 qt.)

Water (boiling) ¼ c.
Sugar, ½ c.
Water (cold), ¾ c.
Salt, f. g.
Gelatin, ½ T.
Fruit juice or grated pineapple, ½ pt.

Soften gelatin in ¼ c. cold water for 5 minutes; add boiling water; stir until dissolved, then stir in the sugar. Add remaining ½ c. cold water, lemon, and fruit juice.

The gelatin may be omitted and stiffly beaten egg white stirred in when the mixture is half frozen.

But do not think that you cannot have a Christmas pudding because your family is small. The suet pudding is an easily made substitute for real plum pudding, and economy fruit cake is not only a cake which keeps for weeks, but when steamed and served with hard sauce makes as good a pudding as you could wish.

Suet Pudding (2 loaves)

Suet (chopped fine), ½ c.
Sour milk, ½ c.
Egg, ½
Bread crumbs (stale), ½ c.
Raisins (chopped), ½ c.
Cinnamon, ½ t.
Figs (chopped), ½ c.
Sorghum, ½ c.
Flour, 1 c.
Soda, ¾ t.
Salt, ¾ t.
Cloves, Mace, Allspice, each, ¼ t.
Walnut meats, ¼ c.

Scald spices with 1 T. boiling water, and add to sorghum, which has been combined with egg, sour milk and suet. Dredge chopped fruits and nuts with ½ c. of the ½ c. flour. Mix and sift ingredients, then add bread crumbs. Combine wet and dry ingredients, stir in dredged fruit and nuts. Fill well-greased molds, two-thirds full. Steam 3 hours. Serve hot with hard sauce or lemon sauce. This pudding remains fresh a month, and may be re-heated by steaming.

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the pan, over the bird. If a thick crust is desired a paste of four tablespoons of butter and four tablespoons of flour may be rubbed over the bird before placing it in the oven. Basting with fat on the plain surface, however, makes a caramelized thin brown crust.

The fowl is sufficiently roasted when the joints separate easily and when the juice flows readily when the skin is pierced.

Time Table

Chicken—25 to 30 minutes per lb.

Goose (9-lb.)—Total, 2½ hours.

Duck (domestic)—Total, 1 to 2¼ hours.

Duck (wild)—Total, ½ to ¾ hours.

Turkey (9 to 10 lbs.)—Three hours.

The skewers and string removed from the fowl, it is ready for the hot serving platter.

Recipes for Stuffing

Poultry Stuffing

2 cups bread crumbs or soft cubes

½ cup butter or melted poultry fat

½ tsp. salt

¼ tsp. pepper

½ tsp. poultry seasoning

Water to moisten

¼ tsp. majoram

Onion to flavor

Mix ingredients well and season to taste. Egg yolks often found in fowl improve flavor of the stuffing. Add water until just consistency to pack well. Will stuff one fowl, duck or goose.

Variations of Poultry Stuffing

A. Fruit Stuffings. Suitable for duck or goose.

1. Prunes, ½ cup; soak, pit, add to stuffing.

2. Raisins, ½ cup; wash, add to stuffing.

3. Apple (raw), ½ cup; cut in small pieces, add to stuffing.

B. Meat Stuffing.

1. Giblets—from turkey or fowl. Grind giblets fine; add to stuffing and season well.

2. Sausage. Suitable for roast goose. Links (small, 3.

Apples (chopped), 1/3 cup. Chop, blend with stuffing.

C. Nut Stuffings. Suitable for turkeys.

1. Chestnut

Chestnuts, ½ cup.

Shell, blanch and cook until tender in boiling salted water. Drain mash and add to stuffing.

2. Peanut. Suitable for goose.

Peanuts (hulled), ½ cup.

Chop, add to stuffing and season well.

3. Walnut. Suitable for turkey.

English walnut meats, ½ cup.

Chop, add to stuffing and season well.

D. Oyster Stuffing. Suitable for turkeys or chicken.

Oysters, 1 cup.

Wash oysters, blend with seasonings in stuffing.

E. Vegetable Stuffing

Chopped celery, ½ cup

Parsley.

Chop and add to stuffing.

Giblet Gravy

Fat in pan, ¼ cup

Flour, ¼ cup

Milk, 2 to 2½ cups

Giblets (chopped)

Blend fat with flour and stir in milk slowly. Add giblets and simmer, stirring constantly until it is of the desired consistency.

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Christmas Festivities in Foreign Lands

(Continued from page 8)

are exchanged—these only between the closest of relatives, as a mother to her child.

"After the Saturday night festivities, about one o'clock in the morning, everyone goes to church. The church is gorgeously decorated, and there is much beautiful singing. Holy oil made by the Pope and Monks at 'Etchmiatzin,' the Pope's home, is in large golden bird shaped vessels. The holy oil drops from the beaks of the birds and as the people pass, they moisten their hands and touch their faces with it. This holy oil is made from the blossoms of thousands of beautiful flowers, by pouring olive oil over them. This is let stand for many days in golden jars while the Pope and Monks pray over it.

"The priest blesses and gives bread to each house he visits. Then he receives a gift in return. As he leaves, everyone kisses the Bible and the priest blesses each one individually.

"Food and good red wine is served and everyone is very happy," and here Mr. Sarkisan smiled, for he said, "Where there is wine, then there is much singing and happiness."

Mr. Malca, of Peru, South America, also a student at Iowa State College, told me that in his country, Christmas is a very sacred affair.

"We do not try to have a good time,"

he said, "for it is a religious holiday. We go to services all day long, high mass, beginning as early as four o'clock in the morning. The women always attend the services dressed in black, with large shawls thrown over their head and shoulders.

"The churches are beautifully decorated and there is much singing. Nearly half of every church is devoted to a raised monument to represent the birth of Jesus Christ. This monument shows the Virgin and Christ, and is made as nearly as possible like the stable in which Christ was born. The three wise men, who came with gifts for the new born Christ are also shown. After the services are over at one church, the congregation goes to all the other churches to see their monuments and decorations.

Christmas Dinner for Two

(Continued from page 9)

Economy Fruit Cake (2 loaves)

Boil together for 5 minutes:

2 c. sugar

2 c. water

2 heaping T. shortening

1 lb. seeded raisins

When cool, add 1 t. soda (heaping), sift together 3 c. flour, 1 t. salt, ½ t. cloves, 1 t. cinnamon, and 1 t. nutmeg. Add to first mixture. Bake in moderate oven for 45 minutes.

The final effect may be produced if you carry the holly-decked pudding to the table enveloped in flames, the result of

pouring lemon extract around it and lighting it.

The following rules may aid in preparing the dinner as quickly and as well as possible.

1. Prepare as much as possible before Christmas day. Vegetables may be prepared for cooking, the fowl dressed, and the dessert made the day or week before, depending on its nature. If home-made candies and salted nuts are served, they may be prepared several days ahead of time and stored in tin boxes.

2. Do not repeat flavors. If you use pineapple in a fruit cocktail, do not serve pineapple ice.

3. Plan an interesting color scheme. Beet salad and carrots would not only be out of harmony, but would be less appetizing. It is better to have a special color scheme for a dinner of this type.

If the young housekeeper will plan so as to have as little as possible to do the day of the big dinner, she will not be too tired to enjoy the dinner or properly entertain her guests. And how glad she will be that she had dinner at home rather than at a restaurant or hotel!

Eda Lord Murphy Writes from Constantinople

(Continued from page 10)

W. C. A. canteen and later I hope to have my two advanced girls prepare hot dishes for the day students who bring lunches.

Everyone has a good time over the week-end because we have Monday holidays. It's simply heavenly! Once a semester there is a holiday from Friday at 4 to Monday at 6. It comes the last of this month, and if the weather is good I shall take an interesting trip. I've been twice up the Bosphorus, once to the end where it comes from the Black Sea. There are many ancient places of interest, and it makes you feel so ignorant of history. Nearly everything you see is picturesque and beautiful, even the old and, perhaps, dilapidated. There is a very strong influence of Persian art here which has resulted in beautiful carving and iron work.

Yesterday I went with the art class to Santa Sophia. It is, of course, the most immense place and architecturally very wonderful, about as beautiful on the outside as some of the French Mosques. In the evening I had thrill after thrill when I read with new appreciation the historic significance of it. It is said that during Ramazan, the Moslem week, as many as 10,000 Turks can get into Santa Sophia at once.

One of the very great beauties of Stamboul, the Turkish part of the city, is the presence of hundreds of minarets. They are the slender, beautifully graceful towers where the call to prayer is given five times each day. Twice I've happened to hear it at dawn. It is just as tho someone with a very powerful tenor voice should stand in the Campanile and with his face toward Mecca remind us that "Allah is great and good, and Mohammed is his prophet." I can see the psychology of it that makes them fanatical sometimes. After sightseeing until I almost dropped (two mosques finished me!) we went to the American Club luncheon.

There must have been fifty or sixty women.

As soon as I can I'll send you a few pictures, and today I have mailed you a copy of the College Quarterly, which I think you would enjoy exchanging for the Homemaker. I particularly want them to see the Homemaker, because they are so interested in all of these practical phases of their education just recently added to the curriculum.

While I'm writing I think I'll send a message to the Home Economics Club. I've been wondering if your budget of benevolence couldn't include something towards meal serving equipment for the department here. We have nothing! Last year there was no necessity for it, but now I think it would add no end of pleasure for the girls to feel that they have a table, chairs, linen, silver, and china for the serving of meals.

Of course, I think we want to keep it as eastern as possible. I'm sure I can find lovely luncheon sets of Bulgarian cross stitch, tho I haven't been able to find much china that I'd ever buy. I hope to bring some lovely Persian prints and fascinating native things, table runners, to the art and clothing departments when I come back. The money that was originally raised is about gone.

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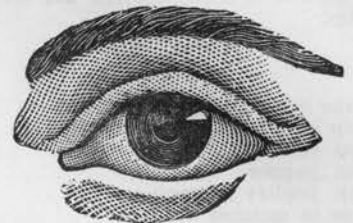
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